

*Amendments to the Claims*

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1 - 8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently amended)      A composition comprising one or more target nucleic acid molecules and at least one oligonucleotide,

wherein at least a portion of said oligonucleotide is capable of hybridizing with at least a portion of said target nucleic acid molecule, and

wherein said oligonucleotide comprises a modified nucleotide at or near ~~the~~ its 3'-terminal nucleotide,

and wherein said modified nucleotide is not complementary to the corresponding nucleotide of said target nucleic acid molecule, thereby rendering said oligonucleotide less extendable in an extension or amplification reaction than if the modified nucleotide were complementary to the corresponding nucleotide of said target nucleic acid molecule.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently amended)      The composition of claim 9 ~~claims 9 or 10~~, further comprising at least one component selected from the group consisting of one or more nucleotides, one or more DNA polymerases and one or more reverse transcriptases.

12 - 74. (Cancelled)

75. (New) The composition of claim 9, wherein said modified nucleotide is a 2'-substituted nucleotide.

76. (New) The composition of claim 75, wherein said 2'-substituted nucleotide is selected from the group consisting of a 2'-alkyl nucleotide, a 2'-alkyloxy nucleotide, a 2'-alkylamino nucleotide, a 2'-alkylthio nucleotide, a 2'-aryl nucleotide, and a 2'-aryloxy nucleotide.

77. (New) The composition of claim 75, wherein said 2'-substituted nucleotide is selected from the group consisting of a 2'-O-alkyl nucleotide, and a 2'-O-aryl nucleotide.

78. (New) The composition of claim 75, wherein said 2'-substituted nucleotide is a 2'-O-alkyl nucleotide.

79. (New) The composition of claim 78, wherein said 2'-O-alkyl nucleotide is a 2'-O-methyl nucleotide.

80. (New) The composition of claim 9, wherein said modified nucleotide is a 3'-substituted nucleotide.

81. (New) The composition of claim 80, wherein said 3'-substituted nucleotide is

selected from the group consisting of a 3'-alkyl nucleotide, a 3'-alkyloxy nucleotide, a 3'-alkylamino nucleotide, a 3'-alkylthio nucleotide, a 3'-aryl nucleotide, and a 3'-aryloxy nucleotide.

82. (New) The composition of claim 80, wherein said 3'-substituted nucleotide is selected from the group consisting of a 3'-O-alkyl nucleotide, and a 3'-O-aryl nucleotide.

83. (New) The composition of claim 9, wherein said modified nucleotide is the sixth base from the 3' terminus of said oligonucleotide.

84. (New) The composition of claim 9, wherein said modified nucleotide is the fifth base from the 3' terminus of said oligonucleotide.

85. (New) The composition of claim 9, wherein said modified nucleotide is the fourth base from the 3' terminus of said oligonucleotide.

86. (New) The composition of claim 9, wherein said modified nucleotide is the third base from the 3' terminus of said oligonucleotide.

87. (New) The composition of claim 9, wherein said modified nucleotide is the second base from the 3' terminus of said oligonucleotide.

88. (New) The composition of claim 9, wherein said modified nucleotide is the

3'-most terminal nucleotide of said oligonucleotide.